Easing of Travel to Red Nations Likely

12/6/66

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The State Department probably will ease the restrictions that have applied for years against U.S. citizens visiting five Communist countries, it was made known yesterday.

But as State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey told newsmen, there was "no reason to expect that all travel restrictions will be removed".

In fact, the gradual easing of the ban on Americans traveling to Communist China has had no practical effect. Peking has refused to issue visas to some 50 Americans—mostly journalists—who have had passports validated for travel there.

The closest of the five, Cuba, has allowed only a very few Americans to enter since relations between the two countries were cut off in 1961.

The other countries included in the ban are Albania, North Korea and North Vietnam.

There were indications that North Vietnam and North Korea and Cuba would remain on the "sensitive" list, but that travel would be permitted to Albania.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk is expected to hand down a ruling by Dec. 20 on what changes will be made. However, because of the sensitive nature of the decision, it might be delayed.

The Department has for months been ploughing through a mass of often conflicting passport regulations, some of which had been unchanged for 28 years. Until this summer it was unable to make a number of changes because some regulations were embodied in executive orders, and it required a directive by the President to change them.

Hereafter the Department will announce once a year which countries are out-of-bounds to Americans, and the reason for the ban. The restrictions formerly had been made known through press announcements at irregular times.